

FEBRUARY - 1942

HARIJAN

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VOL. IX, No. 4]

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1942

[FIVE PICE

BENARES NOTES

II

Some Features and Comments

Gandhiji in his address to the teachers and the students of the Kashi Vishwavidyalaya referred to what he would like the University to make a distinctive feature of its own. But apart from it there are in the University some special features which attract students to it from far and near. Gandhiji referred to the Engineering and the Technological departments. There are similarly the College of Oriental Learning and the College of Theology as also the Ayurvedic College. It has on its staff some of the most distinguished men in India in the sphere of Mathematics and Physics and some distinguished Orientalists, some who have to their credit text-books on subjects like Geology, and some like Prof. Atreya who is the author of many books both in English and Hindi on philosophy and religion. The departments of Oriental Learning and Ayurveda and the Institute of Agricultural Research have plenty of scope for research, though one does not know if much work has been done in that direction. The College of Theology ought not to rest content with giving degrees of *Smriti Ratna*, *Smriti Sagar*, and so on, but these degree-holders should make critical studies of our shastras and produce works of textual and higher criticism as has been done in the case of the Bible by numerous English and European scholars.

The University has besides spacious playgrounds, a well-equipped gymnasium in the Shivaji Hall, and it organises swimming and boat club activities too. In this connection I am tempted to make an observation. A university with 4,000 students has an almost unlimited scope in the direction of organising volunteer work both for the management of big meetings and shows and for the work of communal unity, as I shall presently show. This work, I am sorry to say, was conspicuous by its absence on the day the Convocation was held. It was a tough business to lead Pandit Malaviyaji and Gandhiji on to the dais that afternoon of the 21st. If there was proper organisation, there should have been a clear way prepared for the old leaders to walk to the dais unmolested by the crowds. There was not only no way, but scores of photographers from among the volunteers themselves made a scramble for their darshan and for catching snapshots of them. For a while I wondered whether we were not taking a grave risk in carrying old leaders like Panditji through these unmanageable crowds. And when after very great difficulty they were carried on to

the dais a sort of pandemonium prevailed for quite a long time. It was a sad reflection on our education, learning and culture, and it must have been far from pleasant to Dr. Radhakrishnan to appeal to the audience to be quiet in the name of self-respect and dignity, and in the name of honoured guests like Gandhiji, Jawaharlalji and Rajendrababu. Sports and playing grounds and gymnasia are no use, if they cannot teach us the very elements of arranging and organising meetings, no matter how vast.

I have mentioned communal unity. If these four thousand students were to be taught non-violent military drill and to march like soldiers going to the front, they could form a unique peace brigade. A thousand students, nay even a hundred students, clad in khadi uniform can march peacefully to scenes of rioting, and can by daring and courage to go through some amount of suffering successfully quell a riot. If they were to devote a little thought to this, I am sure the students can be the best organisers of communal unity. That, however, is a far cry. Would they organise themselves as spinners? An hourly spinning would be a good preparation for the volunteer-work for communal unity.

Commendable Features

The University has a branch of the Gandhi Ashram Khadi Bhandar, which is managed by the Benares Gandhi Ashram, and under its auspices is a spinning centre too. There is also a Servants Credit Society and a Co-operative Store, both of which are, I hope, running well. I say 'I hope', as I have had no opportunity of going into their working, but they are commendable features in themselves.

But perhaps the most commendable of all are the Students Sevak Mandal, Vidyarthi Sahayak Sabha, and the Students' Self-Help Circle run by Profs. Asrani and Mukut Behari Lal. The Students' Self-Help Circle deserves special notice. It provides work for poor students, e. g. tuition, photography, typewriting, selling milk, ghee, newspapers, stationery, carrying and painting and polishing furniture, whitewashing houses, gardening, boot polishing and so on. Diligent students earn up to Rs. 15 per month by doing these jobs. Pandit Ram Naresh Tripathi tells the story of an M. A. student who met him one early morning going with pails of milk on his cycle. He has three brothers of his also in the University. Their father earns only Rs. 35 per month and cannot possibly find the wherewithal to educate the sons. The sons are,

therefore, running a small dairy and selling milk and ghee. A hundred such students are thus finding the expenses of their education through self-help. Prof. Asrani is keenly interested in spinning and cottage industries, and his energetic work in all these directions is worthy of praise. He had collected a little purse for Gandhiji for constructive work, and he also presented Gandhiji with a *chudder* made out of yarn of the boys' own spinning.

A word, too, about Prof. Satish Kalelkar and his band of students who slaved for us day and night at our camp. Acharya Kripalani, seeing that most of these students were Gujaratis, twitted him with having chosen only Gujarati students for service in Gandhiji's camp. The fault, if fault it was, was Sir Radhakrishnan's who insisted on Gandhiji being served and looked after by those who knew Gandhiji best. And young Satish, who is fast getting popular among the boys, but who is still fresh in the University, selected the boys he knew best. Otherwise being the son of a distinguished father like Kakasaheb Kalelkar he is, I know, free from any trace of provincialism, not to say communalism. He has a bright future in front of him, and he could not do better than devote his spare time to organising students in the directions I have indicated in these notes.

Watertight ?

Our stay at the University was all too brief for anything like a study of things there, and what I say in this paragraph is subject to correction. The Women's College is a self-contained one walled off from the other buildings. It has its own staff, though I understand that ladies who go in for science have to attend the science classes along with men students. If that is the case, I do not know what objection there should be to lady students having the benefit of lectures in other subjects by men professors. On the other hand, there may be a distinguished lady professor whose lectures men students may well profit by. There seems to me to be no reason for watertight compartments so far as teaching is concerned.

But I would go a little further. There are the weekly Gita classes. I do not know if lady students are allowed to attend them. If not, they should be. On the second day of our stay Gandhiji received a message from the Women's College that he should not go away without giving the lady students at least a few minutes of his time. He readily agreed, and seeing the beautiful *maidan* in front of the College, he felt like having the evening prayer there. The students hailed the proposal with delight. Prof. Asrani, who was to present the students' purse and the *chudder* at prayer time, was also invited to be present there with his students. And for the first time perhaps the lady students and men students had prayers together. At the request of the lady students themselves Gandhiji agreed to listening to a recitation from the Gita by some of them, after the end of the prayer. They recited verses 36 to 46 from the Eleventh Discourse of the Gita. The selection seemed to me to be most appropriate. They could not have thought of a

fitter offering of welcome, and it did one's heart good to think that at least some—if not indeed all—students in the Women's College know the Bhagavadgita. I felt that they should have more opportunities for cultural contact with the outside world and always opportunities of listening to an occasional sermon from the venerable Panditji, Dr. Radhakrishnan and others and all leaders who are invited as guests.

Talks with Congress Workers

Pandit Jawaharlal had arranged two meetings of Congress workers for an informal exchange of views with Gandhiji. At one meeting there were the members of the U. P. Provincial Congress Committee Executive, and at the other there were members of the larger Committee. A number of questions were asked—some wise and some otherwise, which provided a lot of merriment to Gandhiji no less than to the audience, who had the opportunity of observing Gandhiji's humour at its best which contributes a good deal to keep him alive and healthy.

Principles and Objective

Q. What is your ultimate object? Do you want the Congress to accept your principles or to achieve its object?

A. Every plan and programme that I have placed before the Congress has been placed with a view to achieving the goal of Independence. Truth and non-violence are a matter of creed for me—you may call it my religion, but it has not been my object to propagate that religion through the Congress. Before the Congress they have been placed as effective means to an end—as political means for a political objective, as I did in South Africa. If it was otherwise, I should cease to be a political worker and occupy the position of a *dharmaguru*! The political method can be changed whenever expedient, but the change should be honest and deliberate. But one should not pretend to adhere to the method when really in practice one has given it up. That would be deceiving oneself and the world.

Future Programme

Q. We should like to have a glimpse of the next six months or a year as you picture it to yourself. You have often said that this is a fight to the finish, your last fight which will not end until the goal is won. What are likely to be the future developments as you can visualise them?

A. It is a good question, and also a difficult question. Not that I am not clear, but because it takes us into the realm of speculation. I let things and happenings react on me—though I confess I do not follow everything as Jawaharlal with his study of foreign affairs can. Jawaharlal is convinced that the British Empire is finished. We all wish that it may be finished, but I do not think it is finished. We know that the Britishers are tough fighters, we know what the Empire—especially India—means to every home in Britain, and therefore they will never consent to be 'Little Englanders'. Mr. Churchill has said that they are not 'sugar candies', and that they can meet rough with rough. Therefore it will be long before the Empire is finished. There is no doubt, however, that they are

nearing the end, and what Jawaharlal has said is very true that, if we could do nothing to prevent the war, we certainly will do much to prevent a peace in which we have no voice. That is what every Congressman has to bear in mind. We have, therefore, to be up and doing. If we sit with folded hands, we may have a peace which we do not desire.

I adhere to the statement that it is my final fight, but we have had to alter our programme because of the latest developments, because war has come to our door. The suspension had nothing to do with my retirement from the official leadership of the Congress. Even if it had continued, how could I today ask Jawaharlal to march back to jail? Of course he will be in jail, if he is prevented from doing the work we have chalked out. But things have happened so rapidly that we had not the slightest idea of what was coming. How then can I talk of a year or even six months ahead? That we are marching swiftly towards Independence I have no doubt. There is no doubt about the programme ahead of us. No Congressman should rest content with just paying his four anna fee. He has to be active all the twentyfour hours. Even the one concrete programme of production of cloth is sufficient to occupy all our energies. There are 400 students in the Benares Hindu University. Will they spin an hour every day? I am talking of spinning because it is a thing nearest my heart, but there are a hundred and one other things. Have the villagers enough food to eat? Have they enough to cover themselves in this bitter cold? These are the questions that occur to me again and again. On our capacity to feed the starving and clothe the naked and generally to serve the masses in the time of their need will depend our capacity to influence the peace whenever it comes. What I have said applies to all parties. Whoever serves the purpose best will survive and have an effective voice.

Q. You think they cannot have a treaty just as they like?

A. I do. The days of secret treaties are gone, I hope. If we behave ourselves, we can have a decisive voice at least so far as we are concerned. But Jawaharlal can explain these things better. I am no student of history or even of contemporary events in the world.

Why Did You Not Divide the House?

Q. Why did you advise the A. I. C. C. members to support the Bardoli resolution, though at one stage you had decided to divide the house? Rajaji's speeches after the A. I. C. C. are against the Bombay resolution, and even expediency dictates that there can be no co-operating with a dying Empire.

A. I am afraid you are 'estopped' from asking the question, if I may use a legal term. But as you have asked the question, and there is nothing to hide, I may answer it. In fact I answered it in my speech before the A. I. C. C., if you listened to it with attention. Well then let me tell you that, though I am old in age, my mind is not decaying. It is ever growing, and the decision not to divide the house indicates my growth or evolution in my own non-violence.

To divide the house appeared to me a piece of violence. If every one of the members of the A. I. C. C. was a *pukka* believer in political non-violence, it would have been a different matter. But I knew that such was not the case. The Bardoli resolution was a true reflection of the Congress mind. In such matters majority and minority do not count. And there was nothing to prevent the whole-hoggers to go whatever length they liked.

The contingency of co-operation is, if anything, very remote. Until then all have to act in terms of non-violence. When the contingency does arise the whole-hoggers can secede from the Congress. In fact we can then meet again and put the whole matter to vote.

Q. Would it be proper or improper to defend oneself with arms against *atayat*is (confirmed offenders) in case of disturbances?

A. The answer has been already given by me and also by the Congress. And the word *atayati* is bad for our purpose. And don't ask what is proper and improper. If you were to ask me, I should say it is improper. If you are non-violent, do not have resort to arms. If you cannot muster non-violence of the brave, defend yourself as best you can. The law gives everyone the right of self-defence against a dacoit, and the Congress does not take away the legal right. But in riots or communal disturbances, he who calls himself a Congressman has to act non-violently. That is the resolution of the Congress. Even there if your courage fails you and you use force, the Congress will not censure you, for the simple reason that the Congress never intended to encourage cowardice.

Limits of Co-operation

Q. You are said to have permitted khadi bhandars to sell blankets to Government. Is it not co-operation in the war effort?

A. I did. It was not proper for me to ask whether the blankets were for the use of soldiers or for someone else. The case is different when a man sells fire-arms or swords or poison. The vendor has to inquire how the fire-arms are to be used, and the chemist has to ask for the doctor's certificate. On the other hand a rice-seller will not, and is under no obligation to, inquire who is going to consume the rice.

But you may go further than I did. If you think I erred, you are at liberty to denounce me. If you think a non-violent man may not sell rice or blankets to soldiers, you are welcome to your interpretation of non-violence. I for one will not hesitate to give water or food to a soldier who comes to me with hands red with murder. My humanity would not let me do otherwise.

The question of spurious khadi was next discussed, and Gandhiji said: "A great deal depends on intelligent and wide-awake public opinion. If the public takes it into its mind to prevent the spread of this khadi, it can easily do so. But we have not cultivated what Lord Willingdon used to call the courage to say 'No'. Those who are interested in khadi are all shareholders of the

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PRICE CONTROL

One wonders if Government who do not want panic and scares do not often help in creating these. For two or three days after the Japanese radio announced that Rangoon had been bombed the news was left uncontradicted. (I refer to the first news of Rangoon being bombed.) The news might have been contradicted at once and the people might have been told that it was a fair indication of Japan's intention and that they should in case of raids stay indoors and so on. Then there are all kinds of stories that have come from the refugees in Rangoon—one of them being of thousands of people having been killed. The Government might have published a true and accurate account of the happenings.

Then there is the very important matter of price control. The police often swoop down upon a petty trader and haul him up before the authorities. We are told that it is being done to 'teach them a lesson'. We know to our cost what 'teaching them a lesson' means. The Committee of the Indian Chamber of Commerce have, in an important communication addressed to the Government of India, shown what havoc price control is working. The purpose is avowedly to make the necessities of life available to the public at a reasonable price and to prevent profiteering. As pointed out in the Committee's letter, "the effect of the measures which the Government have so far adopted has been largely to defeat the end in view. It has been observed that there is a tendency for measures of price control being followed by scarcity of the article concerned, or even its disappearance from the market, unless proper measures are taken by the Government to safeguard against such scarcity or disturbance. Recently, for instance, since the Government of India fixed the sale prices of wheat, further supplies of the commodity in the Calcutta market have become scarce, and indeed the situation has become so serious that perhaps it would be difficult to obtain wheat in the city after some time unless adequate steps are taken in time to maintain supplies. In the United Kingdom also, last year for instance, immediately after the prices of tomatoes and gooseberries were fixed these fruits disappeared from the market." The same story has been received from other places in India. In one place, we are told, it was impossible to get a seer of wheat for one rupee.

The police action is in most cases indiscriminate, and the Committee have rightly adverted to that aspect of the case also:

"At present what is being done is that whenever it is found that a certain article is not being sold in the market, the police, without going into the causes, take indiscriminate action and arrest a few persons

here and there for charging prices higher than the maximum or holding up stocks. Although the Committee do not support the action of those who may be holding up stocks and agree that such practice should be checked, they may point out that such indiscriminate action only tends to dislocate trade, and many small dealers consider it better to discontinue trading in the article concerned rather than 'carry the risk of being thus maltreated.'"

Then there is unco-ordinated action by various Provincial Governments.

"For instance, in September last, the Government of U. P. fixed the prices of wheat in the Hapur market without any relation to prices in other centres, and at a level which was low compared to the prices of wheat in other provinces and markets of India, particularly in the Punjab. The result was that, while dealers in other parts of India, e. g. in Calcutta, who had previously contracted for purchases of wheat in the Hapur market at certain rates could not get supplies from the market, large quantities of wheat were attracted to the Punjab markets where the prices were higher."

There are other aspects of the matter into which we need not go. To end the anomalies and hardships pointed out above, the Committee have proposed that, if the price control measures are to succeed,

"(1) The maximum fixed by the Government must bear proper relation to the replacement costs; and

(2) The Government must be prepared to sell the articles concerned at those rates—the prices to be fixed after taking into consideration the total cost of production, transit expenses, availability of raw material, wages and other factors including reasonable profit."

This is an eminently sound proposal, and Government should have no difficulty in giving effect to it. The Committee have made suggestions in this behalf. The Government, they suggest, should, after fixing the maximum prices, establish a few large granaries in different centres of the country and be prepared to sell at that rate any number of bags to customers retail or wholesale. The Government's readiness to sell at a particular price will prevent traders from putting up the prices, as is actually the case with regard to silver.

The proposal should be carefully considered at the Price Control Conference to be held in the first week of February, in consultation with representatives of various trades, and an end should be put to a situation which may soon get out of control.

Sevagram, 1-2-42

M. D.

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GO-SEVA SANGH

I

A Little History

I remember vividly a meeting addressed by Gandhiji during my early days with him. It was in Motihari in 1917 when some good people invited him to visit the local *pinjrapol* and address a meeting on the occasion of its annual celebration. Some of the sentiments he expressed that day gave those assembled a wholesome shock. They had expected praise from him. Instead they received a hard sermon on the way we had in criminal ignorance neglected the cow instead of protecting her. Ever since he has been dinning into the heads of cow-worshipping Hindus the disasters that lie on the path of their ignorant worship. But we have made little headway. The first cow protection society was formed in 1924 at Belgaum with Gandhiji as president. It then became Go-Seva Sangh, a compact body. It has much solid but unpretentious work to its credit. We had been able to bring into being a tannery of dead cattle's hide, and the Lucknow and Faizpur Exhibitions had courts showing the uses of the remains of dead cattle after they are dead. There was in these exhibitions the tannery section showing how a Brahman family can run a full-fledged tannery in as clean a fashion as it can run a kitchen, and at Faizpur and Haripura there was a dairy court showing eloquently how the cow was one of the most important factors in India's economy, and the ultimately uneconomic nature of the buffalo as compared to that of a good cow. But we are far yet from having been able to draw India's attention to this vital problem, and though the workers in the field met at Faizpur and took some important decisions, they have failed so far in awakening Hindu India's interest in the "only scientific society for effectively protecting the cow" as Gandhiji described the Go-Seva Sangh in 1937.

A definite step forward was taken again when Jannalaji, who was advised by Gandhiji not to court imprisonment a second time for reasons of health, took the decision last year to devote all his time and energy exclusively to this work. It was at his instance that Gandhiji was encouraged to decide to give the society an all-India character by forming an All India Go-Seva Sangh. Experts in the field like Mr. Kothawala of the Bangalore Dairy, Mr. Sam Higginbottom of the Allahabad Agricultural Institute, Shri Viswanathan of the Agricultural Research Institute, Sir Datar Singh of the Montgomery Dairy Farm, and others were invited to a Conference held for the purpose on the 1st of this month. The venerable Pandit Malaviyaji had also promised to attend, but Gandhiji dissuaded him from undertaking the long journey. Some of the experts who were invited but who could not come sent either their representatives or their suggestions, and the Conference was fully representative in that many who have been working in the field for several years like Shri Chaunde Maharaj of Wai and representatives of about twelve *pinjrapols* were also present and took part

in the deliberations. Shri Vinoba presided and Gandhiji opened the Conference.

Soul's Outpouring

Although the subject was to Gandhiji as old as the hills he gave it a new setting and delivered a speech as packed with argument as revealing of the agony of his soul.

Many a foreign writer has made fun of the Hindus' religious sentiments about the cow, and in a recent novel England's famous modern novelist Cronin makes a cockney upstart returned to England after a brief stay in India describe his experience thus:

"You might not believe me, Nancy, but the cow is a sacred animal to millions of folks out in India. They'll have images of the animal stuck up in all places, and in the streets of the native quarters you'll see great big cows slushing about, with flowers on their horns and garlands of marigolds round their necks, poking their noses everywhere like they owned the place, into the houses and into the stalls, and not a body says 'no' to them. I once saw one of the beasts stop at a stall of fruit and vegetable and before you could say 'knife', it had cleared the place from end to end, and the man what owned the shop was obliged to sit helpless and watch 'it eat up all his stuff, and when it had finished he could do nowt but put up a bit prayer to it or string the remains of his flowers around its big neck."

Gandhiji with biting irony went one better and cast an even more lurid light on the worship of the cow as seen in the streets of Bombay. "We catch her by the tail and sanctify our eyes with its sacred touch. We regard even her urine as sacred and full of medicinal value and drink it. Alas, the poor cow is innocent of all this worship, and so our worship is lost on her. It even scares her. When it scares her she answers our attentions with a kick; when she is not scared she suffers us." He was simply giving in his own language the pathetic picture that Shrimati Perinben Captain, an indefatigable worker of Bombay, had drawn to him of her daily experience in Bhuleshwar, and who on being invited to attend the Conference had declined, saying in effect: "None of this travesty of worship for me. I might attend when you have put it on a rational footing and shown by concrete work that the Hindus really care for the cow. And if you will protect the cow, why not the horse and the dog too—both of them equally noble?"

"All this is too true," he said, "and those who claim to protect the cow betray a criminal ignorance of the real method of protecting her and her progeny. Those who claim to worship the cow cruelly ill-treat the bullocks. Chaunde Maharaj has been working at the problem assiduously for years, but whilst he accepts my facts and even argument, he says, 'what about the public sentiment? they somehow want to save the cow from the butcher.' But they go about the wrong way and succeed in defeating the very object they are trying to achieve. I do not say this in a carping spirit, but shocking ignorance, and want of understanding of the essentials of the problem betrayed by most of the people who run our *pinjrapols* dismay me."

He referred in passing to the wrong way of protecting the cow from a Mussalman wanting to slaughter her, and said that he would repeat *ad nauseam* that to quarrel with the Mussalman and to kill him in order to protect the cow was to instigate more slaughter.

The Problem of Ghee

He next referred to the difficulty of procuring pure cow's milk and ghee. "The whole milk and ghee trade is in the hands of the Hindus. But have we been able to ensure a supply of pure milk and ghee? The milk is adulterated, and even the water used for adulteration is not clean. The cruel and criminal process of *phooka* is well-known. The ghee sold in the market can often be described as poison rather than ghee. The butter we get from New Zealand, Australia or Denmark is guaranteed pure cow's butter, but there is no guarantee about the butter or ghee available here. There is not a shop in Wardha, where some of us are keen on this problem, where one could go and buy a seer of cow's ghee of guaranteed purity."

The Cow and the Buffalo

Every animal—in fact all life—is sacred and should be protected, but unless we really protect the one that was most valuable in national economy, other animals could not be protected. In our neglect of the cow we had brought both the cow and the buffalo at death's door.

"I therefore say," said Gandhiji, "that, if I can really protect the cow by adopting proper ways and means, I would protect the rest of the animals. But it can be done only if we know the true science and economy of it. Only then shall we be able to interest Perinben in the problem. I am amazed at our partiality for buffalo's milk and ghee. Our economics is short-sighted. We look at the immediate gain, but we do not realise that in the last analysis the cow is the more valuable animal. Cow's butter (and ghee) has a naturally yellowish colour which indicates its superiority to buffalo's butter (and ghee) in *carotene*. It has a flavour all its own. Foreign visitors who come to Sevagram go into raptures over the pure cow's milk they get there. Buffalo's milk and butter are almost unknown in Europe. It is only in India that one finds a prejudice in favour of buffalo's milk and ghee. This has spelt all but extinction of the cow, and that is why I say that, unless we put an exclusive emphasis on the cow, she cannot be saved. It is a tragedy that all the cows and buffaloes put together cannot give us enough milk for the 40 crores of our people. We ought to realise the value of the cow as a good milker and the only source of draught and agricultural cattle. And how far is one to pamper popular prejudices? A cow proves valuable even if she dies, if we would make use of the skin, the bone, the fleshing, the entrails and so on." "But," said Gandhiji, "the good Chaunde Maharaj wonders if people can be persuaded to believe that dead cow's hide is sacred. Why not? I would not hesitate to go into my house with shoes made of dead cow's hide, provided of course the shoes

are clean. I should not hesitate to have my meal with such clean shoes on. I have to do all this in order to show that the cow is an asset and not a liability. Today in many places they bury dead cows or sell them away for a song. We despise the Harijans who eat carrion, but we forget that it is for our own fault. If we treated the hide properly, if we knew the manurial value of the fleshing, and the use of the bone and the entrails—which we are demonstrating at Nalwadi—there would be no carrion-eating."

Pinjrapols

He next came to the question of *pinjrapols* with which almost every town in India is studded, which have plenty of funds, but some of which are grossly mismanaged. "Ever since my return to India from South Africa I have been harping on the question of the reform of *pinjrapols*. Unless we realise and define their proper functions, they are sure to remain the economic waste they are. Their proper function is to take care of dry, old and disabled cows, of which individual owners cannot possibly take care—certainly not in towns and cities. Their function is not that of a dairy—though they may run a separate dairy if they can—but the care of the old and the disabled animals, and to provide the raw material for a tannery. There should be a well-equipped tannery attached to every *pinjrapol*. They should maintain the best stud bulls and loan them out for public use, they should provide every facility for the humane and scientific castration of bulls to be turned into bullocks, and they should be instruction centres for the agriculturist and the dairy farmer. Here is plenty of scope for our agricultural and dairy graduates who should receive additional training for the special work and then be attached to every one of our *pinjrapols*. All the *pinjrapols* should then be affiliated to our Association which should be the central institution for expert advice, collection and co-ordination of information and statistics, and so on. The Association has made it a rule to have as its members those who take the following pledge:

"I agree with the object and means of the Association.

I promise to use cow's milk and its products exclusively, except for medical purposes or under unavoidable circumstances or in the articles of food containing milk and its products in a negligible quantity. I will refrain from the use of the leather of slaughtered cows, bullocks and calves.

I will donate a sum of rupee one or 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn to the Association every year."

Adverting to this Gandhiji said: "Do not magnify the so-called difficulties and the embarrassment you would cause to your hosts. You can go about with cow's ghee wherever you go—as Kakasaheb does—or you can do without it. It will be good propaganda, and you may succeed in converting your hosts also. But duty is not always easy of performance. To run away from it is the opposite of manliness, opposite of humanity."

Sevagram, 3-2-42

M. D.

(To be continued)

HINDI + URDU = HINDUSTANI

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The following letter was written on the 29th ult. and sent to me by its writer by registered post. It was received at Sevagram on the 31st ult.:

"I was very much impressed by your convocation address at the Benares University. Specially your remarks about making Hindustani the medium of instruction in our educational institutions were very apt on the occasion. But do you really believe that there exists in our country any such language as Hindustani? As a matter of fact there is no such language, and I am afraid that at Benares you advocated the cause of Hindi and not of Hindustani, and that is the way with all the Congressmen. I wonder why you openly don't say what you really mean. Say, you want Hindi. Why call it Hindustani, or still worse Hindi-Hindustani, by which name you wanted to call it some years back and which nobody ever used?

Mahatmaji, you say you have no antipathy towards Urdu; still you openly called it the language of Mussalmans, which is written in the Quranic script. You even said that the Mussalmans may take care of it, if they so please. And on the other hand, you several times presided over the annual sessions of Hindi Sabhas and advocated the cause of Hindi and collected lakhs of rupees for it. Have you ever presided over any meeting held for the propagation of Urdu, or would you agree to preside over one now, and have you ever collected a pie for the advancement of Urdu?

I have heard Congressmen saying, *ad nauseam*, that the Muslim writers should avoid Persian words and Hindu writers should avoid Sanskrit words, and the resultant language will be Hindustani.

Mahatmaji, you are yourself a very good writer. You must know that practised writers who have developed a style will never be able to avoid Persian or Sanskrit words, if they are part of the language in which they are writing and of which these writers are regarded stylists; so this advice of yours is absolutely impracticable.

But there is a way out. Make both Urdu and Hindi compulsory at least in one province, say U. P., up to the High School standard. By this means, the province in which both the languages are compulsorily taught will have one common language within, say, about fifty years. The language which naturally belongs to us will remain with us, and the other one which we are artificially thrusting upon ourselves will drop out from our lives. It is obvious that when we shall learn both the languages we shall perforce make that one the vehicle of our thoughts which is more developed, more beautiful, more attractive, more concise, and more expressive. Apart from making the path of vernacularisation smooth and easy, this proposal will help a great deal in bridging the wide gulf between the social life of Hindus and Mussalmans. We shall be able to know and sympathise with each other's ideals and beliefs through each other's literature. It is just possible that a new language may evolve out of the mixture of both Hindi and Urdu; then it may be called Hindustani. It will be a

natural language when it comes out of the knowledge of both.

Mahatmaji, if you sincerely wish that our country should have one common language, I am sure that you will accept this proposal and will recommend it to the country. But I am sure you will do no such thing. Because you are all along advocating the cause of Hindi and are doing your best to thrust it upon the country. And you must also be knowing that, if both Hindi and Urdu are made compulsory, Urdu will push Hindi out of the field, because Urdu is more chaste, more civilised, more expressive, and more beautiful than Hindi. But my proposal gives equal chances to both the languages. If you believe that Hindi is the natural language of the country, you may confidently hope that it will push off Urdu. There is no use taking shelter under the excuse that you have no power to make both the languages compulsory, as you wrote to me last year. If you only care to recommend the proposal to the country, it will have its effect."

The writer has signed the letter, but as it is marked personal I refrain from giving his name. In any case the name does not matter. What the writer says is, I know, the belief held by many Muslims. My repudiation has not undone the mischief.

But my article, which was written on the 23rd ult. and has appeared in *Harijan* of the 1st inst., should soothe the writer so far as I am concerned.

I entirely agree with my correspondent that all who want one all-India speech should today learn both the forms—Hindi and Urdu. Those who do will ultimately give us a common language. That form which is more popular and more understood by the masses whether Hindu or Muslim will surely be the all-India speech. But if my proposal finds general acceptance, the language question will cease to be a political issue or a bone of contention.

I do not subscribe to the correspondent's statement that Urdu is "more developed, more beautiful, more attractive, more concise, and more expressive". No language is intrinsically all that the correspondent says. A language becomes what its speakers and writers make it. English had no merit apart from what Englishmen made it. In other words, a language is a human creation and takes the colour of its creators. Every language is capable of infinite expansion. Modern Bengali is what Bankim and Rabindra Nath have made it. If, therefore, it is true that Urdu is more everything than Hindi, it is because its creators are abler than those of Hindi. I can give no opinion, for I have not studied either as a linguist. I know just enough of both for my public work.

But is Urdu a language distinct from Hindi as, say, Bengali is from Marathi? Is not Urdu a direct descendant of Hindi, written in the Persian character with a tendency to borrow new words from Persian and Arabic rather than Sanskrit? If there was no estrangement between the two communities, such a phenomenon would have been welcomed. And when the animosities have died out, as they will one day, our descendants will

laugh at our quarrels and will be proud of the common Hindustani speech which will be a mixture of words indifferently borrowed from many languages according to the tastes and equipment of its multitude of writers and speakers.

Let me correct one misimpression of my correspondent. He seems to think that Hindustani will finally displace all the provincial languages. That is neither my dream nor of those who have been thinking of an all-India speech. Their dream is that Hindustani should displace English which has almost become a common medium of communication between the educated classes resulting in a gulf being created between them and the masses. The tragedy can be prevented only if the common speech spoken by the largest number of India's inhabitants is adopted as the interprovincial speech. The fight, therefore, is not between Hindi and Urdu, but between the two on the one hand and English on the other. The result is a foregone conclusion in spite of the heavy handicap that the sisters are labouring under, not to speak of the temporary mutual quarrel.

My correspondent quarrels with my connection with the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. I am proud of my connection with that body. It has a record of which it has no reason to be ashamed. The name Hindi was common to both the communities. Both have written in Urdu and promoted its growth. Evidently my correspondent is ignorant of what my connection with that body has meant. It was under my instigation that it wisely, and shall I say patriotically and generously, adopted the definition of Hindi to cover Urdu. He asks whether I ever joined an Urdu Anjuman. I have never been seriously asked to join any. If I was, I would have made a stipulation with my inviters similar to the one I made with those who induced me to preside at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. I would have asked the Urdu-speaking inviters to let me ask the audience to define Urdu so as to include Hindi speech written in Devanagari script. No such luck came my way.

But now, as I have already hinted in my article of the 1st inst. already referred to, I would like to form an Association advocating the learning of both forms of speech and both the scripts by its members and carrying on propaganda to that end in the hope finally of a natural fusion of the two becoming a common interprovincial speech called Hindustani. Then the equation would be not Hindustani = Hindi + Urdu, but Hindustani = Hindi = Urdu.

Sevagram, 2-2-42

Notice

Agents will please note that it is not open to them to charge more than the published price for copies of *Harijan*, and a breach of the rule will lead to the cancellation of their agency. Purchasers are requested to co-operate by refusing to pay more than the published price, and to report to us if extra price is asked for.

Manager

BENARES NOTES

(Continued from p. 31)

A. I. S. A., and it is their duty to take up this work. To feed the hungry and clothe the naked is our immediate programme, and you have all to lend a hand effectively. If you all do so, the question of spurious khadi will not arise. No Congressman can deal in spurious khadi."

The last question was about the Congressmen's duty in times of raids and scares and consequent disturbances.

"The emergency is there today," said Gandhiji. "Dacoities are rampant, and unless the Congress asserts itself effectively the situation will go out of our hands. The need for peace brigades was never more urgent than now. The risk of death is there, whether you choose violence or non-violence. Why not then prepare yourselves to die non-violently? It will also enable you to offer effective resistance in case of a civil war. As for the protection of the wounded in air raids, the bulk of the work will come upon yourselves. You will not join the A. R. P., simply because you will be then parts of a machine over which you have no control and you would be active participants in the war effort. But it is certain that the Government will not be able to render assistance everywhere. Did they do so in Rangoon? We have harrowing tales of dead and wounded lying on the streets of Rangoon uncared for. Wherever, therefore, the authorities fail there will be enough scope of work for us. We have to prepare volunteers for this work ready to take risks and to act with initiative. We may have to remove the dead and wounded, take charge of vacant houses, and so on. In this work you will heartily co-operate with the authorities wherever they will accept your co-operation."

Sevagram, 1-2-42

M. D.

To Correspondents

Correspondents will please note that I neither open nor read all the correspondence that comes to me. And now that I have taken up the care of the three weeklies, the fewest possible letters are put before me, and even those I often do not get the time to read. Correspondents should regard the weeklies as my public letter to them. Therefore they may not as a rule expect personal replies. Many apply for admission to the Sevagram Ashram. For one thing there is hardly room for further admissions. Some insist on replies in my own hand. It is not possible to satisfy this desire, much as I should like to. I would therefore request all correspondents to spare me and my overworked assistants as much as possible.

Sevagram, 4-2-42

M. K. G.

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